

INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE EMPIRE

IN REGARD TO

NAVAL DEFENCE

BY

J. BIDDLECOMBE,

Lieut. Victorian Navy.

MELBOURNE:

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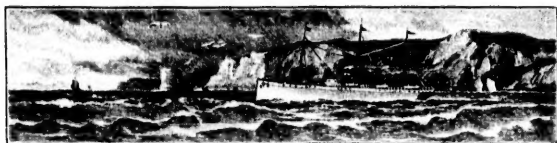


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URING the last few years the minds of leading statesmen, **The Problem.** throughout the British Empire, have been largely exercised over the difficult problem of General or Imperial Defence. A moment's consideration of the scattered positions of the large and important parts of the Empire, shows the difficulty of the problem: Great Britain has an area of 121,068 square miles, and a population of 40,000,000 (approximately). She has colonies and possessions in all "the Seven Seas," reaching from Victoria Land in Canada to Victoria in Australia. In detail they are:—

	NO. OF COL. OR POSS.	AREA IN SQUARE MILES.	POPULATION.
In Europe	2 ..	124 ..	194,000
„ Asia	10 ..	1,687,080 ..	296,259,000
„ Africa	7 ..	286,708 ..	4,092,000
„ America	22 ..	3,626,522 ..	6,837,000
„ Australasia	9 ..	3,256,887 ..	4,511,000
	50 ..	8,857,321 ..	311,893,000

Great Britain, without her colonies and possessions, and with diminished trade, would be in the same position as a minor state, whilst,

*Statistics obtained from different colonies during 1896. Finished Feb., 1897.

on the other hand, the majority of these colonies and possessions are not in a position to take their place in the world as recognised powers. The Empire is like a large business: stop its communications and the business fails. There is a great need of a scheme by which each portion of the Empire takes its responsibilities and does its share towards keeping open these important communications. It is to the interest of the whole British Empire that this should be done. Sir John Colomb, in a pamphlet in 1867, wrote: "The distribution of the forces for the protection of our commerce is a most important, and, at the same time, a most difficult problem to solve. The magnitude of this national requirement is only equalled by the difficulty of meeting it with the means at our disposal. Like everything else upon a gigantic scale, it can only be accomplished by the proper application of general principles. Now, in all naval and military operations, whether offensive or defensive, there is a golden rule, to neglect which is certain ruin; it is the fundamental law which applies to all warfare, and is simply this—that the success of all operations depends upon the dispositions of the forces in such a manner as will best secure the base of operations, and ensure safety and freedom of communication."¹

Ignorance on this subject is quite excusable. Until the year 1889, when Captain Mahan published his book "The Influence of Sea Power upon History," there were no works in untechnical language from which the general public could acquire a knowledge of the subject. The immense power which control of the Seas has had, and (as history repeats itself) will have on the destiny of the British Empire, can only be gathered from a consideration of the history of Sea Power. Limiting ourselves to well-known facts of history, we can readily see how impossible it is for an inefficient fleet to prevent invasion.² The most recent instance is the Chinese-Japanese War in

¹Also see "Essays on Naval Defence," by Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb, p. 23.

²William the Conqueror, 1066.
Conquest of India, 1579-1800.

Crimean War, 1854.
Chinese-Japanese War, 1895.

1895. On the other hand, when any nation has controlled the seas, its commerce has extended and the security of the country has been assured.¹ The British Empire was made by the operation of the law governing sea power. Commander Robinson writes: "In the march of our progress, we came into conflict, first with the Spaniard, the inheritor of the discoveries of Columbus and Vasco da Gama, whose monopolies we were resolved to invade; then with the Dutchman, who had become our commercial rival all over the world; and lastly, with the Frenchman, whom, after a long contested struggle, we subdued."²

The question may well be asked, How is the huge British Empire, with its vast and widely separated provinces, to be maintained? It was made by the influence of the sea; it can only be maintained by that power by which it was made. If the Nation's Mercantile Marine should ever pass into the hands of the foreigner, and the Navy cease to be strong enough to bear its enormous responsibilities, then communications would stop, the outlying parts of the Empire would be seized, and not even England itself would be secure against foreign invasion. Nor does this loss of the outlying parts imply that the colonies would be disloyal. It has been said that upon the outbreak of war between England and a Continental power, colonists would advocate a proclamation of political independence, and the protection of the colonies themselves, by a declaration of

¹ Venice, 997-1450. Genoa, 1000-1350. The Spanish Armada, 1588.

Napoleon at Boulogne, 1803-1805—Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," Vol. II., pp. 117, 118.

² "The British Fleet," by Commander Robinson, pp. 49, 50.

For detailed accounts of the influence of sea power on—

The Fall of Canada—Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History," pp. 293-311.

The Conquest of India—Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History," pp. 293-311.

The Loss of the United States to England—Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History," pp. 341-348, and "Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," Vol. I., p. 3.

neutrality.¹ This is sufficiently negated by the recent offers from Canada, Australia, and South Africa. The advocates of such a proclamation can only be a small minority; for many years to come their views must be a negligible quantity.² Not only so, but it appears conclusively by the cablegrams sent to the Home Government by the Premiers of the principal colonies in times of trouble, that the communities of Greater Britain fully recognise the importance of unity, and are willing to do all in their power to secure it.³

The imminence of danger is not imaginary. During the last two years the Venezuela difficulty, and the German Emperor's famous telegram, made the people throughout the Empire remember that a quarrel with a first-class power could not always be easily avoided. The interest shown by all parts of the Empire in the threatened dangers evidences the conviction of the whole British community that the Empire must maintain its present fortunate position in the world. Its so doing affects the whole of her people. Therefore, the general policy should

**General
Policy.**

¹This was answered very ably by Principal Grant (The "National Review," July 1896) in his reply to Mr. Goldwin Smith. He writes from Canada: "Last Christmas, when Mr. Cleveland's message threatened invasion, in connection with the Venezuela dispute, doubtless we could have arranged by negotiation for peace with the States, and have kept entirely out of the quarrel. The thought did occur to one man, and he was quietly ignored. I know of only two newspapers among our thousands which advocate separation. The tone of those two was as stout and calm as all the others. Like the Scots round the King at Flodden, no one failed the Old Mother. Every man and woman accepted the necessity, and, without a word of complaint, began to prepare for war. Homes in England were safe, and ours in peril. What of that! Britain had been threatened, and, therefore, we, as part of the British Empire, accepted our responsibilities. Already the scare has cost us three millions of dollars, and no one has uttered a murmur against the expenditure."

²Washington, in 1796, said: "To secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force organised and ready to vindicate it from insult on aggression." This is equally true to-day.

³Lord Brassey, in his speech at the opening of Parliament in Victoria on 23rd June, 1896, mentions: "Recent events threatened to involve the Empire in war. Happily they have had no result except to demonstrate the undoubted loyalty of every portion of the Queen's Dominions, and a Force which a united people hold in reserve, and which they are ready to exert when their spirit is aroused. The suddenness with which the danger arose is a warning to Australians that they must be prepared at all times for immediate and concerted action." What Lord Brassey says of Australians is equally applicable to all British Provinces.

be, in the words of Captain Mahan, such that—"In peace, the influence of the Government should be felt in promoting by all means a warmth of attachment and a unity of interest which will make the welfare of one the welfare of all, and the quarrel of one the quarrel of all; and in war, or rather for war, by inducing such measures of organisation and defence as shall be felt by all to be a fair distribution of a burden of which each reaps the benefit."¹

Before considering a scheme of Naval Defence which would satisfy Captain Mahan's requirements, let us shortly look at the chief causes that make for the strength of a fleet and the limitations of that strength: (1.) A well trained personnel is the first requisite if an efficient navy is to be created. History has proved this over and over again. Good men with poor ships are better than poor men with the best material.² (2.) No forts, acting alone, have been able to stop ships, manned by determined men, from passing them, even in

Elements of strength and weakness in a fleet.

¹"The Influence of Sea Power upon History," p. 83.

²"The Influence of Sea Power upon History," 1660-1783, pp. 67, 82, 83.

This is one of the lessons to be learnt from	DATE.		PAGE.		BOOK.
The Battle of Lowestoft ..	..	June 13, 1665 ..	..	108, 109 ..	Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History."
The Battle of the Four Days ..	..	June 11-14, 1666 ..	..	126 ..	
Condition of the Navy in ..	..	1680 — Campbell's "Lives of Admirals" ..	..	— ..	
Condition of the English and French Navies ..	..	1740 ..	..	260 ..	
The Battle off Toulon (Mather's) ..	..	February, 1744 ..	..	266-267 ..	
The revival of the French Navy after ..	..	1759 ..	..	331, 332, 333 ..	
Maritime War in N. America and W. Indies ..	..	1778-1781 ..	..	Chap. X. ..	
Condition of French Navy in Sea fights between single ships and squadrons ..	..	1793 ..	..	36-46 ..	
French Revolution ..	..	1795, 1796 ..	..	59, 60 ..	
French Fleet under Villaret ..	..	1798 ..	..	102 ..	
Battle of Cape St. Vincent ..	..	February 14, 1797 ..	..	178 ..	Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon the French Rev. and Empire"
Battle of the Nile ..	..	August 1, 1798 ..	..	223-229 ..	
The Trafalgar Campaign ..	..	August 1, 1798 ..	..	276, 277 ..	
The Action off Charleston ..	..	1803-5 ..	..	141, Vol. II. ..	
Farragut at Mobile Bay ..	..	1863 ..	..	100 ..	
Cruise of the Alabama ..	..	1864 ..	..	133 ..	
Battle of Lissa ..	..	1864 ..	..	159 and 165 ..	
The Civil War in Brazil ..	..	1866 ..	..	213, 214, 249 ..	
Chinese and Japanese War ..	..	1894 ..	..	51 ..	
Yalu ..	..	1894 ..	..	125 ..	

confined waters.¹ (3.) But of course, when ships, alone, are pitted against forts, the forts with their communications still open should come off best in the fight; and, at the present day, no admiral would be justified in risking his fleet in a well sustained action against forts without being driven to take that course by some grave necessity.²

But admitting the truth of the three positions stated above, the success or failure of a navy absolutely depends on the distribution of ships during peace, and also during war. As this question of the distribution of ships has been much canvassed, especially by Australians, it may be as well to see what so eminent an authority as Captain Mahan says about it. Writing concerning the Naval Policy in the West Indies 1793-1810, he says, "Great Britain had undisputed naval supremacy in the West Indies, and the question before her was, not

Naval Policy.

1

	DATE.	PAGE.		
The Influence of Sea Power upon History ..	1660-1783	.. 14 ..		
Fall of Canada	1760	.. 294 ..		
Farragut up the Mississippi	1862	37-60	Vol. I.	H. W. Wilson, "Ironclads in Action."
Passing numerous forts				
Capture of New Orleans	1861-63	61-85		
The opening of the Mississippi	1864	114-134		
*Farragut at Mobile Bay	1865-66	259-264		
War between Brazil and Paraguay	1884	11, 12	Vol. II.	
Brazilians passing several forts on River Paraguay				
The French in China—Mingan Channel ..	1893	38, 39,		
*The Civil War in Brazil—the numerous times armed ships passed in and out Rio Harbour	1895	40, 51		
Chinese and Japanese War—Port Arthur and Wei-hei-wei		127-134-136		

This is one of the lessons to be learnt from

Mahan.

*Sydney, Melbourne or Montreal run the same risk as Rio or Mobile ran. See also: "The Relations between local fortifications and a moving Navy," by Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb.

2

	DATE.	PAGE.	BOOK.
The opening of the Mississippi ..	1863-64	83, 84, 85	H. W. Wilson, "Ironclads in Action."
Actions off Charleston	1863	96, 97	
Farragut at Mobile Bay	1864-65	133, 134	
Bombardment of Callao by Spain	1866	225-256	
Franco German War	1870	284	
*Bombardment of Alexandria ..	1882	348	
Japanese Fleet in Chinese Waters	1895	134 (Vol. II)	

* Could this operation have been successful (a) against forts armed with modern artillery, and manned by determined and skilled soldiers: or (b) if there had been an enemy's fleet ready to swoop down immediately after the bombardment?

to beat the enemy's fleet, but to secure her own commercial routes. To this end it was necessary to disseminate, not concentrate, her ships, and to provide them with convenient centres of refuge and supply along the routes. The case was analogous to the police arrangements of a city. In ordinary quiet times the police are distributed to cope with individual offenders; when a mob gathers and threatens the peace they are concentrated in large bodies."¹

If the plan here sketched is that which ought to be adopted, then many colonial naval arrangements are glaringly faulty. In Australia the opposite course to that advised by Captain Mahan is pursued. Each of four important colonies in that large Continent has a Governor and responsible Ministers, one of whom is a Minister of Defence; and professes to have a naval organisation for the defence of its own ports. Until Federation unites the colonies we shall have no central authority controlling the Naval Forces of the whole. It is obvious that the material of these local squadrons is, under these circumstances, as useless as the police force of a city would be if its members were fixed to their beats and could not be concentrated in force at a point at which the danger threatened. The illustration of the policeman is very complete if we consider him as placed in a protected position and armed, to represent a fort, and offenders, to represent ships; a fort can no more readily deal with a ship than the policeman can catch the passing thief. Again, if a fort's communications are cut, it is just as much at the mercy of ships as the policeman would be at the mercy of offenders out of his reach. Whilst, on the other hand, should a ship be rash enough to fight a duel with a fort, it would have no better chance than an offender would have with the protected and armed policeman. The impossibility of concentrating the forts upon any part of the ocean in which a fleet might assemble, as much destroys their usefulness as would the stationary position of the policeman, his, in the event of the gathering together of a mob. Indeed, a force so situated could not follow the well-known example of the Nation's Naval heroes—*e.g.*, Nelson concentrating his Mediterranean Fleet off Toulon; Cornwallis

¹"The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," by Captain Mahan, Vol. I., p. 112.

with his command off Brest; Pellew off Ferrol; and Collingwood's Fleet off Rochefort, during the years preceding Trafalgar. These, cutting the communications between the units of the French naval strength in those ports, stopped their concentration and their power to control the English Channel, which was necessary to enable Napoleon with his army of 130,000 men, ready at that time on the heights above Boulogne, to descend upon England. Obviously, had the English been without the power of a central authority to collect the outlying forces, this great operation would have failed. Probably enough has been written to show that a large expenditure on stationary forts to the detriment of moving forts is wasteful and comparatively useless.¹

The present system of the Naval Defence of portions of Greater Britain is defective and inefficient. From a national point of view the system is also objectionable, in that it tends first to isolation and then to separation.

Doubtless the reader is aware that the strength of the personnel of the Navy is sufficient for its purposes in times of peace. It is not sufficient to man all ships lying in reserve, which would be required for active service in times of war. To keep all these ships in commission would be altogether too expensive. Hence the creation of the Royal Naval Reserve, a body composed of officers and men, in times of peace employed in the Mercantile Marine, and whose services in times of war the Admiralty commands. It is generally thought that when war comes, the responsible positions in all ships will be filled by men belonging to the Royal Navy, whilst the Royal Navy Reserve men will occupy positions, for which a knowledge of seamanship and gunnery is indispensable.² The training of the Naval

**The Royal
Naval
Reserve.**

¹ Also see "Essays on Naval Defence," by Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb, pp. 14-30, 137-143, 167, 191.

"Influence of Sea Power upon French Revolution and Empire," by Captain Mahan, Vol. I., p. 112.

² "No country has maintained afloat in peace the number required in actual war. Such a policy would involve enormous expenditure not only in pay, provisions and pensions, but in maintaining the ships to give the practice at sea which is essential. If men remain too long in harbour they lose their sea habits." (Lord Brassey at Melbourne, June 1st, 1896.)

Reserve is of vital importance. Considering the little time spent on yearly drill it is in most cases difficult—if not impossible—to attain the highest degree of efficiency.¹

The distribution of Naval Reserve men in time of war is also of very great importance. They ought to be all over the world when war is declared, so that they may be readily distributed equally amongst the various naval ships on the different naval stations.² A small number of them will be so distributed, for they will be in merchant ships at different ports and on the high seas at that time.

**Distribution
of the R. N. R.**

¹ Vice-Admiral the Hon. Sir Edward Freemantle, sums up the requirements for a modern man-of-war's man as follows (Feb., 1892):—

- (1) Habit of a sea life, sea legs, sea stomach, etc.
- (2) Physique, activity, hardness, power to stand considerable changes of climate, and of enduring prolonged spells of exceptionally hard work.
- (3) Efficiency in boat work, anchor work, and general seamanlike knowledge of the day.
- (4) Efficiency in gunnery and torpedo work of all descriptions.
- (5) Education, intelligence, trustworthiness.
- (6) Alertness, readiness of resource, quickness of decision; in fact, the many qualities which are included in the expressive word "smartness."
- (7) Knowledge of stoking and work in the engine room.

² Commander Honner, in his prize essay at the Royal United Service Institute this year, says: "What, on the outbreak of war, is the plan for manning the fleet? Supposing that it were possible to distribute the Naval Reserve throughout the whole fleet, three-fourths of the seamen element of a crew would compose of Regular Service men, and one-fourth Naval Reserve; but such a distribution and re-arrangement of crews would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry out in the face of impending and probably (for recent events show that hostilities may take place before a declaration of war is made) actual hostilities. And it must be borne in mind that such a break up of the crew of a commissioned ship would be most demoralising to her efficiency, heart-breaking and discouraging to the captain and officers, who would see all their previous work in preparing the ship for the crucial test of battle upset at the advent of the trial. It is difficult to imagine such a policy of changing horses whilst crossing a stream can be contemplated, yet, if this is not so, what is the alternative? It can only be that the ships in commission will retain their crews, and those put in commission on the outbreak of hostilities will have a large proportion of Naval Reserves. Would this be a satisfactory state of things? or, in other words, do the Naval Reserve sufficiently meet the requirements of men-of-war's men to justify their forming such a large proportion of the seamen element of the crew as would be required?"

"No definite answer can be given to this question, for it must be remembered that as far as actual experience in the sea-going fleet goes, the Naval Reserve must be considered an untried force."

The extension
of the R.N.R.

Further, the numbers are being increased as more ships are being built. The manner of obtaining these additional men may be the subject of differences of opinion. One way suggests itself to the writer as worthy of adoption—namely, that of training the men in the British colonies in which they happen to be. In Canada, Newfoundland, Australasia, and South Africa, the population is 11,510,000,¹—more than one-fourth of the population of the British Isles. Now the United Kingdom, with a population of nearly 40,000,000, employs as a peace establishment in the Navy 72,000.² It encourages, by every means in its power, proper men to volunteer for both the Royal Navy and Royal Naval Reserve; yet, with the exception of a few commissions to sons of colonial gentlemen, no great encouragement has been given on the part of the Home authorities to the 11,500,000 inhabitants of these portions of Greater Britain to volunteer for service in the Royal Navy; nor has a system of Naval Reserve been devised by which these men—scattered as they are all over the world—might be utilised for war purposes at a time when their services would be of vital importance to the Empire. It is admitted by experts that the extension of the Naval Reserve is a necessity in the face of the increase of ships and of the impossibility of maintaining them on a war footing in peace time. Hostilities might commence before war was declared, and the small numbers of Royal Naval Reserve at Home would be fully required for manning the ships in Home waters—the ships lying in Reserve out of commission, and those being hurriedly built. This leads to the conclusion that the adoption of the suggestion to use colonial personnel, on the spot, ought to be taken into consideration. Incidentally,

¹ ESTIMATED POPULATION DECEMBER 1895.

Canada	5,000,000
Newfoundland	198,000
New South Wales	1,277,870
Victoria	1,181,769
New Zealand	698,706
Queensland	460,550
South Australia	357,405
Tasmania	160,834
Western Australia	101,235
South Africa	2,074,000
	<u>11,510,369</u>

² Captain S. M. Eardley-Wilmot, R. N. 2nd Prize Essay.

a great national Service would result, by the strengthening of the bonds which at present exist between England and her colonies.

Let us look at the policy which at present governs the Naval Defence of Greater Britain. In the first place, the authorities consider—and it is conceded—that any armed force that is not under the direct control of the Home authorities may become a source of weakness to the British Empire; the recent trouble in South Africa has been principally attributed to the absence of that control to which Jamieson's Force would have been subject had it been governed from the War Office. Whilst this is so with regard to the Army, the principle of a control from a strong central head applies with a much greater force to the Navy. Trained local forces may serve a purpose in their respective colonies without its being necessary to remove them from the countries in which they are raised. But a naval force can only serve its highest purpose by those rapid combinations which are effected through a central command. Further, any one local government, having a naval force subject to its command, may do infinite mischief by employing its naval forces in a manner tending to frustrate some cherished design of the British Government. This raises the question of how most simply and cheaply to concentrate the command. One plan is for each part of the Empire to subscribe in proportion to its population to the Imperial Naval Defence Funds—a course which is now being pursued by the colonies of Australasia:—

**The present
Colonial
Naval Defence
Policy.**

New South Wales contributes yearly	..	..	..	£37,989
Victoria	..	..	..	35,132
New Zealand	..	..	..	20,772
Queensland	..	..	..	13,691
South Australia	..	..	..	10,625
Tasmania	..	..	..	4,781
Western Australia	..	..	..	3,010 ¹
Making a total of				<u>£126,000</u>

Neither Canada nor South Africa contributes to any Imperial Naval Defence Fund. From the circumstance that this system is adopted by the Australian Colonies, we may conclude that their governments approve of it, or, at least, that hitherto no better system has been pointed out.

¹ Compiled on 29th February, 1896; subject to slight revision when returns are finally examined.

Advantages of the "contributing" system.

The chief advantages of the system of each separate part of the Empire contributing to the General Naval Fund are:—(1) All forces being under the direct control of one authority. (2) The work would be effectively done by the great diplomatists and warriors of the Nation, who have at their command recognised channels of knowledge and perfect naval organisation. It cannot be pretended that isolated local bodies could be equally effective. It must be remembered that with responsible government in each colony, there would be continual changes of policy.¹ (3) It is also the least expensive, having those advantages which a large, well arranged business has, in buying, manufacturing, and administering.

Disadvantages of the "contributing" system.

Some of the disadvantages of each part of the Empire separately contributing are:—(1) Recognising that the personnel of the Navy is a vital element of success, an immense waste of some of the best men results from an absence of encouragement to the younger members of Greater Britain, forming part of the Empire. Although they help to make England what she is, they are not so educated as to be of any appreciable assistance to her, away from their own homes, when the inevitable war comes. (2) The younger inhabitants of Greater Britain have not been by training brought face to face with the hardships, both in body and pocket, which their forefathers endured, and upon which the peaceful retention of their distant homes depend.

¹ Commander Honner, in his prize essay, published April, 1896, writes:—
 "It is conceivable that in a time like the present, when public opinion is alive to the wants of the Naval Service, that money would be granted to raise the number of men to the amount necessary to meet the requirements of the Fleet. It must not be forgotten, however, that history repeats itself, and that public opinion is a very variable quality, subject to enthusiastic heights to be succeeded by hollows of apathy; to be safe with this shifting quality, it is better to take a mean course, and not trust alone to the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, without taking into account the hollow of apathy. Lulled into apathy by the postponement of the inevitable war, public opinion will in course of time become indifferent to the needs of the Navy; and the Government of the day, finding itself burdened with an increasing non-effective vote, will try to reimburse itself by reducing the numbers on the effective list. If any are inclined to doubt on this point, and to consider the view taken to be pessimistic, let them look into the state of affairs prevailing in the period preceding the Naval Defence Act."

Let them also look at the state of affairs at present prevailing in some of the Colonial Naval Forces.

In relation to this, the reader may remember what Mr. Wilson, Secretary to the Navy League, in writing to the "Army and Navy Gazette" concerning the celebration of Trafalgar Day on October 21st last year, says:—"The importance of Trafalgar is greater to-day than when Lord Nelson died. The Empire has had time for peaceful expansion. But for Trafalgar, India and the Colonies would now be ruled by other hands, and Her Majesty the Queen would have been the Sovereign of a small State instead of the head of a vast Empire, in which all races and creeds and opinions are as free as in England herself. . . . The danger that prolonged peace and prosperity may cause men to forget that omnipotence of our national existence, is an unanswerable reason why the Queen's subjects should remember Trafalgar Day and the lessons that it taught us." Exactly so; and if this applies to England, it does so with more force to Greater Britain, where, in the absence of contact with kith and kin in any permanent armed force, the tendency is to believe that the Navy and the Army are simply expensive, out-of-date playthings—a heavy expense on the exchequer of a young and struggling colony; and to forget that if there are not enough volunteers or money for the Navy and the Army, conscription must come. (3) In the money contributing system there is no provision for efficiently manning and keeping manned ships on the different foreign stations¹ during hostilities (which might commence before war was declared) without drawing from the supply at home, every man of whom will be wanted for the ships there—those in Reserve and those being hurriedly built.

Now, leaving the question of contribution, we may look at what a portion of Greater Britain does for herself in actual Naval Defence works. Whilst it is clear that the colonies must be prepared to deal with attacks, so small in force that they might elude reasonable diligence and forethought on the part of the Admiralty, it is no doubt true, as stated by the Duke of Devonshire, that the Admiralty has accepted the responsibility of protecting all British territory abroad against organised invasion from the sea. This position is fully recognised by

**Present
Colonial
Defences.**

¹Australian Station last year.

H.M.S. "Tauranga"	} Examples.
H.M.S. "Mildura"	
H.M.S. "Boomerang"	

some of the colonies. In addition to spending vast sums on immovable forts, the following amounts are being annually spent on Permanent Naval Defence Forces in :—

¹ New South Wales	£1,971
Victoria	26,530
² Queensland	5,000
South Australia	4,225
Tasmania	31
	<u>£37,757</u>

These forces are supplemented in time of war by Naval Reserves, in :—

COLONY.	FORCE.	NO. OF MEN.	COST PER ANNUM.
New South Wales	.. Naval Brigade	.. 335 ..	.. £ 4,613
" " " " " "	.. " Artillery	.. 206 ..	.. 2,178
Queensland	.. " Brigade	.. 300 ..	.. 2,000
Victoria	.. " Brigade	.. 151 ..	.. 1,500
South Australia	.. " Reserve	.. 150 ..	.. 1,500
" " " " " "	.. " Volunteers	.. 15 ..	.. 150
	.. Making a total of	.. 1,137 ..	.. 11,941

The Cape of Good Hope has no Naval Reserve, but a Commission is at present sitting to report what provision it is desirable to make in respect to Coast Defence generally.³ The Dominion of Canada also has no local Naval Defence Force.

It will be gathered from what has preceded that England has fleets all over the world to protect British interests, but that these fleets on the outbreak of war will be found difficult to man, and almost impossible to keep manned; and that some of the chief colonies are creating a local Defence Force—each under a separate authority—the disadvantages of which have already been pointed out.

As a mode of bettering the present state of things, all the small colonial bodies, at present under various names (*e.g.*, Naval Brigade, Naval Volunteers, Naval Artillery), might be amalgamated with the

Suggested
improve-
ments.

¹Also £6,200 on Royal Naval House.

²£7,000 more if the *Guyundah* is in commission.

³Cape of Good Hope, Government Notice, No. 858, 3/9/96.

Royal Naval Reserve under one general policy. The importance of a body of Royal Naval Reserve so constituted, with its *esprit de corps*, its unity of interests, and its bases all over the world, would be very great. The uncertainty of the future which local government engenders—by changes in management—makes greatly against the efficiency of any force. The R.N.R. could be augmented by men from the coastal and fishing trades of the colonies, to whom at present there is no encouragement given to join any Naval Defence Force. In 1891, the provinces of Canada had 27,079 fishermen and 13,928 men trained as sailors. This does not include Newfoundland, which has (as near as can be judged) 5000 men employed in coasting and fishing.¹

Some of the principal Australian local shipping lines are :—

COMPANY.	DECK HANDS, NOT COUNT- ING OFFICERS.	ENGINE ROOM STAFF, NOT COUNTING ENGINEERS.
Union Steam Shipping Co. ..	 636	 507
A. U. S. N. Co.	 197	 239
Adelaide S. S. Co.	 142	 158
Howard Smith & Sons	 106	 132
Huddart Parker & Co.	 42	 44
McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co. ..	 49	 55
	 1,172	 1,135 ²

Assuming that it has been satisfactorily shown that a general Naval Policy need not fail for want of men, it still has to be considered how these men can be drilled, mobilised, etc. If we take Australia as an example, we find that an Imperial Act provides “for the equipping, manning, and maintaining at the joint cost of the Imperial and Colonial Funds, a Naval Force, consisting of five cruisers and two torpedo gunboats, which have the same status as H. M. ships of war. The officers and men are changed triennially, and the limits where they are to be employed in times of peace or war are fixed with the boundaries of the Australian Station. It is provided that no reduction of the Imperial squadron shall be made in consequence of the equipment of this naval force. The Australasian

¹ From lecture by the Hon. T. A. Brassey at Melbourne, Oct. 25, 1896.

² This does not include cooks or stewards employed.

colonies contribute 5 per cent. of the cost of these vessels—not to exceed £35,000 per annum—and the actual charge of their maintenance.”¹ The agreement is for ten years. The ships mentioned were launched in 1889 and 1890, and the scheme has not met with general satisfaction,² nor does it encourage, to any appreciable extent, men from the four and a half millions of inhabitants forming a portion of Greater Britain, to help personally in the Naval Defence of the Empire. It appears to foster the old, fatal idea of levying a colonial tribute: taxation without representation.³

The completion of the work already commenced.

So much progress has been made in Colonial Defence, under great difficulties, that it would be unwise to destroy what has been built up at great cost of time and money. Any changes to be made should come only in the form of improvements and modifications to bring the work to completion. For instance, the Australian colonies could institute a Federal Defence Committee, having a Naval Director who would be responsible to the Admiralty for the Naval Defences of the colonies in the same manner as Captain Hext, R.N., of the Indian Marine is in India. Again, the present Australian Auxiliary Squadron (or such ships as the Admiralty should select) might be placed under the control of the director, subject to conditions similar to those of the *Cerberus* in Victoria.⁴ They would make good “Guard Ships” at different ports in the colonies. Great Britain is already so provided, and as far as England is concerned, in peace time they would be more useful in this capacity than the *Tauranga*, *Mildura*, and

¹ See Coghlan's Statistics for New South Wales.

² See Australian daily papers on the reports of the meeting of the British Empire League, December 3, 1896.

³ Since this paper was written, Lord Charles Beresford, R.N., appears to have expressed a strong opinion that the Colonial contributions to the Defence of the Empire ought to consist entirely in the establishment of local naval bases. See “Age” and “Argus” of 19th July, 1897.

⁴ In the arrangements made between Mr. Verdon in 1866 (then Treasurer of the colony of Victoria) and the Home Government *re* the *Cerberus*, it was stipulated: “The colony will bear the cost of manning and maintaining her, in time of peace of using her as a training ship for a local Naval Force.” . . . Then about the *Nelson* and the *Cerberus*: “If either of these shall cease to be maintained and used for the purposes for which it is given, the property in it will revert to her Majesty's Government, discharged of all the above stipulations.”

Boomerang are at the present time.¹ Also, the Federal Defence Committee might undertake to keep the Guard Ships manned by, say, two-thirds permanent men, and one-third Naval Reserve, ready to embark at any moment. Their use would be to protect the floating trade in Australasian waters. So far as Australia is concerned, this scheme could be carried out without any additional financial burden to the colonists. The £126,000 before shown to be contributed by the colonies to the General Naval Defences, together with the £37,757 spent on permanent Naval Forces by some of the colonies, make a total annual expenditure of £163,757. This sum is sufficient to pay the cost of maintaining the ships and of manning them all the year round with two-thirds of their full complement; the money for the other one-third would be supplied by the £11,941 before shown to be annually spent on Naval Reserves. If, therefore, these suggestions be worth considering, they need not be rejected on the score of expense, so far as Australia is concerned. As to other outlying countries, taxation for Naval Defence purposes is fair and inevitable; and if carrying out these suggestions would impose taxation on them, that taxation will be less by their falling into a general scheme than by separately dealing with their own defences. If more money should be required as these extensions are made, the colonists, having to bear the taxation, would be concerned to inquire into the use made of their money: and then they would see that stationary forts on the sea coast are not substitutes for a moving navy; then, probably, the money spent on stationary forts and on moving forts will be differently apportioned.²

Obviously, the outcome of such an unification of the nation's distant sea-forces as that suggested would be to place the whole of the British Empire in the same position as the British Islands are at the present time—with respect to "Guard Ships" around their coasts,—that is: At the chief sea-port towns modern sea-going ships would be stationed during the greater part of the year, always in commission. They would be used as recruiting ships for the Royal Navy

The result of suggested improvements.

¹ These are, at the present time (June, 1896), lying up in Sydney Harbour, "in reserve."

² Not that land forts are unnecessary; this has been very clearly argued by Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb in numerous lectures given at the Royal United Service Institution in London.

and for the Royal Naval Reserve, and as training ships for both forces. The ships could be mobilised once a year for manœuvres (following the practice already adopted by the Admiralty with regard to England). They would in war time be ready to protect the floating commerce in the waters of the dependencies at which they are stationed,—the equivalent of the policeman left behind in the quiet parts of the town whilst the police force as a whole was dispersing the mob. Further, it would follow that a most important body of men, trained in the latest mode of naval warfare, and actually familiar with the ships in which they would be required to serve (a not unimportant matter) would be raised. They would be distributed all over the world when hostilities commence. The importance of a well drilled Reserve, and a scheme of mobilising them in an efficient manner, cannot be over-estimated. Further, the Empire would be strengthened by obtaining in time of war the actual services of her people residing in Greater Britain, instead of taking their money to pay for the services of other members of the nation for their protection.

**Financial
Resources.**

To anyone interested in this, it is gratifying to know that the public mind is becoming alive to the importance of the subject. It may not be uninteresting to look at some views which have already been voiced. H. O. Arnold-Forster, Esq., M.P., writes: "The commerce of the Empire protected by the Royal Navy amounts to no less than £930,000,000, and of this total the commerce of the self-governing colonies alone represents no less than £143,000,000, or one-seventh of the whole. For the protection of this commerce, a sum of £20,000,000 sterling is to be spent this year. Towards this the self-governing colonies contribute £269,000, *or one-seventy-fifth part of the whole!* The balance, of *seventy-four seventy-fifths*, is paid by the tax payers of the United Kingdom! Now, it may be said that the colonies are young communities, poor and struggling for existence. In view of the magnificent pictures of Colonial wealth and prosperity which are painted for our edification every time a fresh Colonial loan is being financed, it seems scarcely necessary to dwell on this branch of the subject. The wealth, the resources, the energy, and the boundless prospect of the self-governing colonies have been dinned

into our ears with such persistent repetition of late that it would be churlish on our part not to accept such statements as representing solid facts."¹

Another view is put by Sir Rawson W. Rawson, K.C.M.G., C.B., who, writing on the Maritime Trade of the United Kingdom (1869-1889) remarks: "I will conclude this series of letters with a statement of the import and export trade with Australasia, and of the loans raised in England by that group of colonies in each year. There appears to be no immediate connection between the columns of exports and loans, but it can scarcely admit of a doubt that such large sums loaned annually must have greatly stimulated the trade between the two countries, greatly to the advantage of both, *especially the export trade from the United Kingdom*: and this may be traced in the Quinquennial Abstract which follows it, and which will enable the reader to realise the actual growth of the trade, import and export, the great increase of the loans in the last ten years, and the very large proportion which the amount of loans bears to the amount of exports. It must be noted, however, that the Annual Table shows a decreased proportion in the last three years, but still amounting to 30 per cent.

TRADE OF UNITED KINGDOM WITH AUSTRALASIA. £ MILLIONS.			LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND BY AUSTRALASIA. £ MILLIONS.	TRADE OF UNITED KINGDOM WITH AUSTRALASIA. £ MILLIONS.			LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND BY AUSTRALASIA. £ MILLIONS.
—	IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.	—	—	IMPORTS.	EXPORTS.	—
1869	12.1	14.4	.. 8.9*	1880	25.7	18.7	 18.3*
1870	14.0	10.7	.. 2.5	1881	26.9	23.9	 5.1
1871	14.5	11.1	.. 1.7	1882	25.2	28.4	 3.3
1872	15.6	15.5	.. 1.9	1883	25.9	26.8	 14.8
1873	17.3	19.2	.. .5	1884	28.3	26.8	 16.6
1874	18.5	20.7	.. 2.1	1885	23.3	28.1	 21.8
1875	20.5	21.2	.. 4.2	1886	20.9	25.0	 12.5
1876	21.9	19.5	.. 5.3	1887	23.3	22.3	 6.4
1877	21.7	21.5	.. 2.5	1888	25.5	28.6	 9.7
1878	20.8	21.5	.. 6.1	1889	26.8	25.5	 7.2
1879	21.9	17.9	.. 10.9				

* Part of these sums were distributed over subsequent years.

¹ The Imperial Federation (Defence) Committee.—"The Navy and the Colonies," by H. O. Arnold-Forster, M.P.

QUINQUENNIAL ABSTRACT OF FOREGOING TABLE.

PERIODS.	IMPORTS. £ MILLIONS.	EXPORTS. £ MILLIONS.	LOANS. £ MILLIONS	PROPORTION OF LOANS TO EXPORTS PER CENT.
1869 to 1875 ..	.. 14.7 ..	.. 14.2 ..	.. 3.1 ..	 22.1
1874 .. 1878 ..	.. 20.7 ..	.. 20.9 ..	.. 4.0 ..	 20.0
1879 .. 1883 ..	.. 25.1 ..	.. 23.2 ..	.. 10.5 ..	 45.2
1884 .. 1888 ..	.. 24.3 ..	.. 26.1 ..	.. 13.4 ..	 51.2
Year 1889 ..	.. 26.8 ..	.. 25.5 ..	.. 7.2 ..	 28.3

"This table, and an examination of similar returns of trade with other countries which have been large borrowers in the London Money Market, suggest the enquiry whether *the rate of consumption of British goods in such countries, Colonial and foreign alike, is not in a great measure dependent upon the means provided by England herself.*" (August 7th, 1890.)

The
"Speaker."

The weekly and daily papers, without touching upon statistics, speak with no uncertain voice on the subject. "The Speaker," London, September 1895, writes:—"We desire to see local supplementary navies owned by the colonies, and manned and officered by the colonists. Such a squadron would be a help in war time, and in peace would train the colonists in the duties of self defence—duties which no body of *Englishmen* would *depute*. We do not care to see the colonists, as it were, hiring British ships, at so much per ton per annum, to guard their shores."

The "Age."

The "Age," Melbourne, in a leading article on December 9th, 1896, writes:—"But there is not the smallest prospect of the colonies agreeing to merge the Auxiliary Squadron in the British Navy and continue the payments as a subsidy to the British Admiralty. The popular idea here at the time of the original agreement was that the Squadron was to be the nucleus of a Federal Fleet."

The "Argus."

The "Argus," Melbourne, in a leading article on the Duke of Devonshire's speech on Imperial Defence, December 3rd, 1896, written on January 7th, 1897:—"In the reference to the agreement which called the Australian Auxiliary Squadron into existence—an arrangement which will shortly come up for review—two points are especially noticeable. Firstly, the speaker emphasised the value which Great Britain set upon this agreement, not only on account of the increase

to her Naval Forces involved, but because it was the first practical step taken towards Federation for Imperial Defence. Secondly, he made it clear that while the Government attaches great importance to the renewal 'in some form' of the arrangement, its terms are open to revision. . . . If the account is to be fairly adjusted, both the debtor and the creditor sides must be considered." The Duke of Devonshire in the same speech said "he hoped that a conference would assemble shortly in London to discuss the whole question."

The Cape of Good Hope has Enquiry Commissioners already **Conclusion.** dealing with the subject; and the different colonies forming Australasia, having passed the Federal Enabling Bill,¹ are once more talking about Federation, in relation to which the amalgamation of the Defence Forces is one of the first things to be considered. The time to form a glorious scheme of mutual protection appears to have arrived, and it behoves all persons having the interest of the nation at heart to strain every nerve to bring about the desired change. The great, but, it is hoped, not insurmountable, rock ahead presents itself in the difficulty of getting the politicians in the self-governing colonies to come into accord. But surely they will see, as all must, that to neglect to seize the opportunity which now presents itself of bringing into accord and understanding the scattered Naval Forces of the Empire—a proceeding which would effectually defeat any endeavour of an enemy to deal with those forces in detail—would be unwise in the extreme. We should lay to heart the lessons which brought about the North German Confederation in 1866. If the people of Greater Britain were fairly approached, they would be perfectly ready to face the question in a common-sense, honourable, and patriotic spirit.

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¹ Except Queensland.